

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1-3 and 7-10 are pending in this patent application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC 102

Claims 1-3, as now amended, are allowable over Robins et al., because Robins et al. does not disclose every element of any of these amended claims. For example, Robins et al. do not disclose: generating a master dust map describing physical manifestations of dust on the electronic sensor array based on the determining; calculating a transformation of the master dust map to generate a manifestation of the master dust map that includes information describing dust location and appearance as a function of one or more optical parameters including exit pupil dimension of the lens assembly or distance of dust from a surface of the electronic sensor array that corresponds to a focal plane of the lens assembly, or both; analyzing pixels within one or more further acquired digital images and updating the master dust map or the manifestation of said master dust map, or both, in accordance with the analyzing; and determining based on the updating whether a threshold distribution of dust artifacts is present within said one or more further acquired digital images, as recited at amended claim 1. As claims 2-3 are dependent from amended claim 1, they too are allowable over Robins et al.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC 103

Claims 7-8 and 10 are allowable over Robins et al. in view of Kitawaki et al., because no combination of Robins et al. and Kitawaki et al. teaches or suggests every limitation of amended claim 1 upon which claims 7-8 and 10 are each based.

For example, no combination of Robins et al. and Kitawaki et al. teaches or suggests: generating a master dust map describing physical manifestations of dust on the electronic sensor array based on the determining; calculating a transformation of the master dust map to generate a manifestation of the master dust map that includes information describing dust location and appearance as a function of one or more optical parameters including exit pupil dimension of the lens assembly or distance of dust from a

surface of the electronic sensor array that corresponds to a focal plane of the lens assembly, or both; analyzing pixels within one or more further acquired digital images and updating the master dust map or the manifestation of said master dust map, or both, in accordance with the analyzing; and determining based on the updating whether a threshold distribution of dust artifacts is present within said one or more further acquired digital images, as recited at amended claim 1 upon which claims 7-8 and 10 are each based.

Kitawaki et al. only discloses recording a dust map for specific focal lengths and aperture sizes. However, differences between different types of lens subsystems are not considered by Kitawaki et al. According to Kitawaki et al., a dust correction for a new lens is determined based on a stored dust map (presumably derived using a previous lens) for the same magnification (see paragraphs [0011]-[0012] of Kitawaki). Applicants' advantageous invention as set forth at amended claim 1, upon which claims 7-8 and 10 are each based, considers, for example, that two lenses may not have the same exit pupil, nor distance from dust surface, and thus will not have the same transformations from the master dust map.

Kitawaki et al. do not teach nor suggest to transform a master dust map to generate a manifestation of the master dust map for one or more specific optical parameters, calculated as a transformation of the master dust map based on these optical parameters. Instead, the table of Figure 4 of Kitawaki et al represents a series of independently determined dust maps each of which is specific to (i) a particular lens, (ii) a particular focal length for that lens, and (iii) a particular aperture setting.

Claim 9 is allowable over Robins et al. in view of Anderson, because no combination of Robins et al. and Anderson teaches or suggests every limitation of amended claim 1 upon which claim 9 is based. For example, no combination of Robins et al. and Anderson teaches or suggests: generating a master dust map describing physical manifestations of dust on the electronic sensor array based on the determining; calculating a transformation of the master dust map to generate a manifestation of the

master dust map that includes information describing dust location and appearance as a function of one or more optical parameters including exit pupil dimension of the lens assembly or distance of dust from a surface of the electronic sensor array that corresponds to a focal plane of the lens assembly, or both; analyzing pixels within one or more further acquired digital images and updating the master dust map or the manifestation of said master dust map, or both, in accordance with the analyzing; and determining based on the updating whether a threshold distribution of dust artifacts is present within said one or more further acquired digital images, as recited at amended claim 1 upon which claim 9 is based.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner's reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Deposit Account No. 50-4399.

Respectfully submitted,

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